

REMARKS

The present filing is responsive to the Examiner's concerns noted in the Office Action.

Examiner's Interview

Applicant is grateful for the opportunity of an interview with the Examiner on October 31, 2007, and the courtesy extended by the Examiner at the interview. At the interview, the Jeong reference was discussed in reference to previously presented claims 6 and 7. Agreement was reached that claim 6 is patentable over the combination of Rottmayer and Jeong (namely, neither Rottmayer nor Jeong discloses coupled waveguides wherein input spot size is larger than output spot size). The Examiner suggested potential amendments to claim 7 to distinguish over Rottmayer and Jeong. The Examiner reserved the right to further search and examine the present application.

The Examiner indicated that the finality of the present action would be withdrawn, given that previously presented claim 6 had not been substantively amended raising new issues necessitating new ground of rejection.

Summary of the Response

Claims 1, 7, 12 and 18 have been amended. Claim 6 has been canceled without prejudice. New claim 21 has been added. Claims 1-5 and 7-21 remain pending in this application. Reexamination and reconsideration of the present application as amended are respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections under 35 USC 103

Claims 1-2, 6-12 and 15-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rottmayer et al. (US 2003/0198146) in view of Jeong et al. (US 2002/0039469). Claims 3-5 and 13-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rottmayer et al. (US 2003/0198146) in view of Jeong et al. (US 2002/0039469) as applied to claims 1-2, 6-12 and 15-20 above, and further in view of Dawes et al. (6744951). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

While Applicant disagree with the obviousness to combine Rottmayer and Jeong, given the Examiner's indication that claim 6 is patentable over the combination of Rottmayer and Jeong, Applicant amended claim 1 to incorporate the limitations of claim 6 in the interest of forwarding this case to early allowance. Given that claim 6 does not include any substantive amendment, claim 1 as amended would not introduce any substantive amendment. Accordingly, any new ground of rejection in the next action would not have been necessitated by the present amendment, and the next action should not be made final.

Independent claims 12 and 18 have been similarly amended as claim 1. Claims 12 and 18 as amended should be patentable over Rottmayer and Jeong for at least the same reason as for claim 1.

The dependent claims add limitations that further define over the cited references. For example, claim 7 as amended require the first waveguide and the second waveguide are supported relative to each other along a general direction of travel of the recording head relative to the data recording medium, and the first width of the first waveguide (i.e., input waveguide) and the width of the second width (i.e., output waveguide) are measured along such general direction of travel, and wherein the first width is larger than the second width. The

corresponding "width" dimensions d_{in} of the input waveguide and d_{out} of the output waveguide in Jeong, as measured in a corresponding direction from the center of the input waveguide to the output waveguide, is opposite to the recited dimensional relationship. Specifically, d_{in} is smaller than d_{out} in Jeong.

New dependent claim 21 requires the first waveguide and the second waveguide are spaced from each other along a general direction of travel of the recording head relative to the data recording medium, wherein the first width of the first waveguide and the second width of the second waveguide being measured along the general direction of travel, and wherein the first width is larger than the second width. The corresponding "width" dimensions d_{in} of the input waveguide and d_{out} of the output waveguide in Jeong, as measured in a corresponding direction from the center of the input waveguide to the output waveguide, is opposite to the recited dimensional relationship. Specifically, d_{in} is smaller than d_{out} in Jeong.

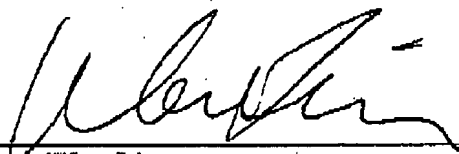
CONCLUSION

In view of all the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that the claims pending in this application are patentable over the references of record and are in condition for allowance. Such action at an early date is earnestly solicited. **The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned representative to discuss any outstanding issues that may not have been adequately addressed in this response.**

The Assistant Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 and 1.17 that may be required by this transmittal and associated documents, or to credit any overpayment to **Deposit Account No. 501288** referencing the attorney docket number of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

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Wen Liu
Registration No. 32,822

LIU & LIU
444 S. Flower Street; Suite 1750
Los Angeles, California 90071
Telephone: (213) 830-5743
Facsimile: (213) 830-5741
Email: wliu@liulaw.com